

IN THE CLAIMS

1-12. (canceled)

13. (currently amended) An intervertebral spacer device comprising:

a first plate having an exterior surface;

a second plate having an exterior surface;

~~a mesh secured over one of said exterior surfaces, wherein said mesh is deflectable relative to the one of said exterior surfaces,~~ wherein an inner surface of one of said plates comprises a ball-shaped structure extending therefrom and an inner surface of the other one of said plates has a spring affixed thereto, said spring having a curvate volume for receiving and holding therein said ball-shaped structure, said spring having a top side with a curved convex surface that extends from the curvate volume and confronts the one of said plates and an underside with a curved concave surface that extends from the curvate volume and is spaced from and confronts the other one of said plates.

14. (currently amended) The device as claimed in claim 13, further comprising a mesh secured over one of said exterior surfaces, wherein said mesh is deflectable relative to the one of said exterior surfaces, and wherein the one of said exterior surfaces includes a substantially flat region and said mesh overlies and is spaced from said substantially flat region.

15. (previously presented) The device as claimed in claim 14, wherein said mesh overlying said substantially flat region has a convex shape when in an undeflected state.

16. (currently amended) An intervertebral spacer device comprising:

a first plate having an exterior surface; and

a second plate having an exterior surface;

~~a mesh secured over one of said exterior surfaces, wherein said mesh is deflectable relative to the one of said exterior surfaces, said device further comprising a joint that couples said first and second plates together, said joint including a ball attached with one of said plates and a socket affixed with the other one of said plates~~ for receiving and holding therein said ball, wherein said joint permits said first and second plates to move relative to one another, and wherein said socket has a top side with a curved convex surface that confronts the one of said plates and an underside with a curved concave surface that is spaced from and confronts the other one of said plates.

17. (canceled)

18. (previously presented) The device as claimed in claim 13, wherein said spring comprises a force restoring element disposed between said plates for counteracting load applied to at least one of said plates.

19. (canceled)

20. (previously presented) The device as claimed in claim 13, wherein said ball-shaped structure is inwardly deflectable for being inserted into said curvate volume.

21. (currently amended) An intervertebral spacer device comprising:

first and second plates having exterior surfaces, said first and second plates being movable relative to one another;

~~a deflectable porous surface secured over one of said exterior surfaces, said porous surface being movable between an~~

~~undeflected state and a deflected state,~~ wherein an inner surface of one of said plates has a ball-shaped structure extending therefrom and an inner surface of the other one of said plates has a spring affixed thereto, said spring having an opening for receiving and holding therein said ball-shaped structure, wherein said spring has a top side with a curved convex surface surrounding the opening and confronting the one of said plates and an underside with a curved concave surface surrounding the opening and spaced from and confronting the other one of said plates.

22. (canceled)

23. (previously presented) The device as claimed in claim 21, wherein the opening of said spring comprises a curvate volume for receiving and holding therein said ball-shaped structure.

24. (currently amended) The device as claimed in claim 21, further comprising a deflectable porous surface secured over one of said exterior surfaces, said porous surface being movable between an undeflected state and a deflected state, wherein said deflectable porous surface has a curved surface when in the undeflected state.

25. (previously presented) The device as claimed in claim 21, wherein said deflectable porous surface comprises a wire mesh.

26. (previously presented) The device as claimed in claim 25, wherein said wire mesh has a perimeter that is anchored to the exterior surface of the one of said plates and a center that is movable relative to the exterior surface of the one of said plates.